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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

1-Mr.Belmont
1-Mr.Mohr
1-Mr.DeLoach

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

DATE: 1-25-64

1-Mr.Evans
1-Mr.Rosen
1-Mr.Sullivan
1-Mr.Malley
1-Mr.Branigan
1-Mr.Lenihan

FROM : Mr. W. A. Branigan

SUBJECT: LEE HARVEY OSWALD
INTERNAL SECURITY - RUSSIA - CUBA

"The Nation" magazine, which has a long history of writing scurrilous articles about the Director and the FBI, has printed an article in its 1-27-64 issue entitled "Oswald and the FBI" (pages 86-89) by Harold Feldman. It identifies Feldman as a translator and journalist living in Philadelphia who previously worked extensively for the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Our files indicate we conducted a Loyalty of Government Employees investigation of a Harold Feldman in 1949 when Feldman was employed by the SSA in Philadelphia.

[redacted]

"The Nation's" current article entitled "Oswald and the FBI," is another bitter attack upon the Bureau. Using utter falsehoods, rumors gossip and newspaper reports taken out of context, the author leaves the impression that Oswald was an informant of the FBI. This is the line being taken by the Communist Party (CP) and other groups who are bitter in their opposition of the Bureau and is another attempt to discredit the Bureau. Oswald, of course, never was approached by us to become a Bureau informant.

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Set forth below is a detailed analysis of the allegations and statements made by Feldman in his "Nation's" article:

Allegation

On the day after the assassination, the Dallas Chief of Police complained on television that the FBI had interviewed Oswald about a week earlier and had failed to inform the Dallas authorities of this fact -- something the Bureau would normally do after making contact with a suspicious Red.

Facts

The allegation is not entirely true and does not present the full picture. Dallas Police Chief Curry did make such statements on television approximately 11:25 a.m., 11-23-63. We immediately had SAC Shanklin contact Curry and tell Curry to get back on television and inform wire services these statements on his part were false. At 1:15 p.m., 11-23-63, NBC television quoted Curry as refuting such statements. We also confidentially requested our sources at United Press International and Associated Press to get Curry on record repudiating his false allegations. This was done. The fact is we did not interview Oswald one week earlier as alleged. We never interviewed Oswald in Dallas or Irving, Texas prior to the assassination.

Allegation

Michael Paine, who with his wife helped take care of Mrs. Oswald and the two children, "claimed that FBI agents had visited Oswald more than one time after he returned to Dallas from a trip to Mexico City." Oswald returned to Dallas from Mexico on 10-3-63.

Facts

The statement that FBI agents had visited Oswald after he returned to Dallas from a trip to Mexico City is false. We did not interview Oswald following his return from Mexico until after his arrest in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy. Furthermore, we have interviewed Michael Paine and he never made such a statement to us.

Allegation

William M. Kline, Chief of the U. S. Customs Bureau investigative services in Laredo, Texas, stated on November 25 that Oswald's movements were watched at the request of "a federal agency at Washington." (New York Post, November 25.) Eugene Pugh, U. S. agent in charge of the Customs office on the American side of the bridge at Laredo, Texas, said that Oswald had been checked by American immigration officials on entering and leaving Mexico. Mr. Pugh admitted to the New York Herald Tribune that this was "not the usual procedure. He said Americans were not required to check in with Immigration when crossing

the border, "but U. S. immigration has a folder on Oswald's trip."

Action

We have instructed the San Antonio Office to interview Kline and Pugh concerning statements attributed to them and to check U. S. Immigration, Laredo, Texas, to determine if they had folder on Oswald.

Allegation

Feldman alleges FBI tried to recruit Oswald as an undercover informant in Castro groups two months before Mr. Kennedy's death. He references a report which appeared in a "Philadelphia Inquirer" dispatch from Dallas, 12-8-63, which reported: "The FBI attempt to recruit Oswald as an informant, an informed law enforcement source said, was made in September, just after he had moved to Dallas from New Orleans. Oswald's mother said an 'agent named Hosty' came to the Irving house and talked to the young man at length in his car. An FBI agent named Joseph Hosty handles investigations of subversives for the Dallas field office. The source said he did not know if the FBI succeeded in hiring Oswald; and the federal agency would not discuss the matter."

Facts

We have previously run down this allegation and interviewed the Philadelphia reporter, Joseph Goulden, who authored the article in the "Philadelphia Inquirer." Goulden told us he received this data from an unidentified law enforcement officer in Dallas but refused to identify such source. This same law enforcement officer also informed Goulden that Jack Ruby had obtained entrance into the Dallas Police Department by posing as a television cameraman's helper on the day Oswald was shot. Investigation has failed to corroborate such statement.

Agent James P. Hosty of Dallas, of course, did not interview Oswald in September, 1963, at Irving, Texas. Bureau's last interview of Oswald, prior to the assassination, took place at Oswald's request on 8-10-63 by Special Agent John L. Quigley when Oswald was in jail at New Orleans, Louisiana, charged with disturbing the peace by creating a scene.

Allegation

Feldman also references article of Lonnies Hudkins in 1-1-64 issue of Houston "Post" entitled "Oswald Rumored as Informant for U. S."

He indicates Hudkins received information on the authority of William Alexander, assistant to Henry Wade, Dallas District Attorney, that Oswald had Agent Hosty's home and office phone and car license number; further that Hudkins indicated FBI coverage of Oswald was not too close or FBI would have known about the rifle, but as a sheriff's deputy put it, "you just wouldn't think to check out one of your own stoolies." Hudkins quotes Wade, himself a former FBI agent, as saying, "It may be true, but I don't think it will ever be made public if it is."

Facts

The Dallas office has advised that the address book of Oswald's showed Special Agent James P. Hosty's office telephone number and his car license number one digit off. Agent Hosty furnished his name and office phone number to Mrs. Ruth Paine when he interviewed her concerning the whereabouts of Oswald on November 1, 1963. Agent Hosty did not give Mrs. Paine the license number of the Bureau automobile and presumes that she may have jotted such number down on her own initiative unknown to him.

The fact that Agent Hosty's name appears in Oswald's address book has not yet been set out in our Dallas reports. To date, only those items in Oswald's address book needing additional identification and investigation have been set out in our Dallas reports. Agent Hosty's name and other items in Oswald's address book not pertinent to our investigation have not yet been reported. However, in view of "The Nation" article and the interest the Commission is showing in such article, the Dallas office is immediately including in its next report all data in Oswald's address book not already reported, including the item concerning Agent Hosty. *

I think this was a mistake. A

We have interviewed both District Attorney Henry Wade and Assistant District Attorney William Alexander of Dallas concerning remarks attributed to them in Hudkins' article. Wade stated that reporter Hudkins was formerly a police reporter for both the Dallas "Times Herald" and the Dallas "Morning News." Wade stated Hudkins was a rather wild type of reporter and that he was in Dallas after the assassination of President Kennedy representing the Houston "Post." Wade remembers that some time in late December, 1963, Hudkins posed some leading questions to him, whether Oswald was an informant of the FBI, CIA or some Governmental agency. Wade stated he told Hudkins "I don't know anything about it" and that he possibly might have told Hudkins "even if he were, I don't think it ought to be publicized." Wade definitely denies the statement attributed to him by Hudkins.

* 2/19/64 -- This data reported in Dallas 2/11/64 report. RCL

Assistant District Attorney William Alexander advised Dallas office that some time in December, 1963, Hudkins did appear and talk with him and he indicated that he was working on a real good story, trying to prove that Oswald was an informant of the FBI, CIA or some Governmental agency and that he had received information that Oswald's notebook which had been seized by the police had Agent Hosty's name and the telephone number of the local FBI office, and possibly a license number of a car and that Hudkins had asked Alexander if that did not mean Oswald was an informant of the FBI. Alexander claims that he told Hudkins that he did not know anything about Oswald's being an informant. When questioned about the notebook by Hudkins, Alexander told us that he told Hudkins "it looks like you have the story there." Alexander denied making any further statements to Hudkins.

Allegation

Feldman also intimates that what the public hears of the FBI's part in the Oswald case is usually a report that such and such a witness or authority has been asked, or ordered, to keep his mouth shut. The author then cites a number of individuals apparently contacted by him who failed to give him any information, including Dr. J. J. Humes of the Naval Medical Center who refused to furnish data on the autopsy of President Kennedy; Western Union authorities who refused to give information regarding data in their possession concerning Oswald; or witnesses who furnished data concerning Oswald or the assassination weapon.

Facts

It is entirely possible that Dr. Humes, Western Union officials and other people would not furnish information to reporters and to the general public. The FBI did not tell people to "shut up." Furthermore, records of the Naval Medical Center, Bethesda; Western Union records and the like could only be obtained through a subpoena.

Allegation

Feldman alleged that the statements of Oswald's widow regarding Oswald's attempt to kill General Walker were a deliberate "leak" and that though the FBI is reported to have found a document in Oswald's handwriting that mentions his attack on Walker, such document has not been produced for examination or reproduced in the press.

Facts

Our interviews with Marina Oswald, wife of Lee Harvey Oswald, have not been leaked by us to the press but have been reported to the President's Commission in accordance with the President's instructions. We also turned over the note left by Oswald which appears to tie him in on the attempt to kill Walker. However, at no place in the note does Oswald name Walker or indicate he planned to kill anyone.

Allegation

Feldman in questioning reports that Oswald had previously tried to kill General Walker states that an article in the 12-7-63 "Philadelphia Inquirer" reported that "Dallas police reported the bullet was from a .30-06 caliber rifle. The weapon used to kill Mr. Kennedy was a 6.5 millimeter weapon, equivalent to about .270 caliber."

Facts

Early reports indicated the bullet fired into General Walker's home was a .30-06. However, examination by FBI Laboratory revealed such report was not true and that the Walker bullet could not have been fired from a .30-06 rifle. The Walker bullet, however, could be fired from the Oswald rifle. It is the same caliber, same type of military bullet and the rifling impressions on this bullet are the same as those produced by Oswald's rifle. However, because of extreme mutilation and distortion of the Walker bullet and other factors, it was not possible to determine whether or not the Walker bullet actually was fired from Oswald's rifle.

Allegation

Feldman also attempts to show that Oswald had considerable money which enabled him to make expenditures which would have cramped the purse of a suburban status seeker. He states that Oswald had $1,600 when he went to Russia to defect in 1959 and that his trip to Mexico in September, 1963, would have cost him at least $1,000. He also alleges that Oswald repaid a State Department loan of $435.71 between October, 1962, and January, 1963, "during which time he was unemployed for several weeks."

Facts

Oswald's mother claimed Oswald had saved about $1,600 while in the U. S. Marine Corps. When he arrived in England, 10-9-59, he declared $700. His transportation fare from New Orleans to Southampton, England,

was $215, plus $5.75 tax. Oswald repaid the State Department loan between period 8-7-62 and 2-7-63. During the period of time in which the payments were made, Oswald is known to have earned about $1525 through employment he obtained. In connection with Oswald's trip to Mexico in September, 1963, we determined that a round-trip bus ticket from New Orleans to Mexico City would only have cost Oswald approximately $55.

While Oswald's income generally was very small, he managed, by utmost thrift, to live within it. In addition, Oswald contributed little to the support of his wife and children while they were residing at the home of Mrs. Ruth Paine.

Allegation

Feldman alleges that after the murder of the President, the police found in Oswald's room "several expensive cameras and rolls of film."

Facts

The Dallas Police Department has turned over to the Dallas office material belonging to Oswald which it obtained at the home of Mrs. Ruth Paine, Irving, Texas, and from the last known residence of Oswald at 1026 North Beckley Street, Dallas, Texas. This material included a Minox camera*, a Stereo Realist camera, and a Suera-Two camera. The list price of these 3 cameras if purchased new would cost approximately $325. If purchased used in the U.S. or if purchased in Europe, the cost would be considerably less. In addition, a quantity of exposed film, color slides and color film was obtained. This data has been examined by the FBI Laboratory and is being retained as evidence in this case. Included in this material were photographs of Oswald holding a rifle, wearing a pistol and holding the "Militant." Also, 24 negatives concerning Oswald's selective service card and Marine Corps certificate which he used to make new cards for false names.

Allegation

Feldman reports that an Associated Press dispatch of November 30 from Dallas says in part that someone telegraphed small amounts of money to Oswald for several months before the assassination of President Kennedy - $10 to $20 at a time. Feldman alleges FBI secretive about such payments and states if money came from a Government source, then FBI's reticence understandable.

Facts

We have made a very thorough and painstaking search for evidence showing Oswald received or paid out money via Western Union. We developed no information to corroborate such activity on his part.

* 2/12/64 - Has been identified by Michael Paine as his. RDL

Memorandum for Mr. Sullivan
Re: Lee Harvey Oswald
105-82555

Allegation

Feldman goes to great length to compare Oswald's language, spelling and grammar in a letter he wrote to his mother from Russia with a letter he wrote to Mr. Lee, Fair Play for Cuba Committee. He emphasizes that Oswald's spelling in his letter to Lee is correct and suggests that Oswald was aided by FBI in writing such letters which of course indicates he was under FBI control.

Facts

Feldman's reasoning here is ridiculous. Oswald possessed

an English dictionary and used it in some of his correspondence. It is quite apparent Oswald, in his letter to Lee, is attempting to impress upon Lee that he is a great organizer and valuable asset to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Furthermore, we obtained copy of letter in question through an anonymous source and there are numerous misspellings in the letter not shown in Feldman's article.

Allegation

Oswald's apartment, too, was filled with fascinating things. Besides the batches of leaflets with the legend "Hands Off Cuba!" and bearing the unauthorized imprint of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, police found seven metal file boxes filled with names of Castro sympathizers. How did he manage, in so short a time, to compile so extensive a list?

Facts

Feldman does not state which residence of Oswald's is involved here. The statement, however, is completely false. The search by Police authorities in Dallas and Irving, Texas, home of the Paines where Oswald's wife, Marina Oswald, was residing, did not produce such data. Itemized lists of evidence turned over to Bureau by Dallas and Irving, Texas, Police Departments contain no listing of seven metal file boxes filled with names of Castro sympathizers.

Allegation

Feldman states "The FBI appears once more in Oswald's news life during the last two days before he was killed. One report details two telephone calls made by FBI agents to the Dallas Police on November 24, warning them of threats against Oswald's life. The threats materialized later the same day under circumstances which raised a forest of questions throughout the world."

Facts

At 2:30 a.m., Sunday 11/24/63, Dallas Office received anonymous telephone call from a man who indicated he represented a committee that was going to kill the man that killed the President. This information was relayed to Dallas Police Department and Dallas County Sheriff's Office at 3:00 a.m. 11/24/63. At 8:15 a.m. SAC, Dallas, personally followed this incident by informing Chief of Police Curry of the facts concerning the anonymous call.

Allegation

Feldman states that Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, has insisted that an agent of the FBI showed her a photograph of Jack Ruby just about 17 hours before Ruby shot her son.

Facts

It is true we exhibited a photograph to Mrs. Marguerite Oswald following Oswald's arrest in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy. Such photograph was not of Ruby but instead was a photograph of an unidentified individual in Mexico City whom Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) felt might be identical to Oswald. The photograph was shown to Mrs. Oswald to determine if the individual depicted in the photograph was identical with Lee Harvey Oswald. (It was not identical with Oswald)

Allegation

Feldman concludes his article by quoting from a "New York Times" article for December 10, 1963, which he states reported the FBI gave Secret Service a "risk list" of Dallas individuals in advance of President Kennedy's fatal trip, but the list did not include the name of Lee H. Oswald; further, that an official source had explained Oswald was not under surveillance by the FBI at the time of President Kennedy's visit to Dallas November 21, 1963; and that months of checking by the FBI had indicated Oswald was neither a spy nor a saboteur.

Facts

The FBI made no such release as above. This was another of the leaks of the Department giving information to Tony Lewis of the "New York Times." Obviously, the release does not set forth the complete statutory area of FBI responsibility in dealing with spies, saboteurs, subversives, criminals or other individuals engaged in activities inimical to the interest of the United States. We did disseminate to Secret Service prior to the assassination information concerning two incidents possibly having a bearing on the personal safety of the President. No "risk list" as such was furnished to the Secret Service.

Criticism of Other Agencies

Feldman, in his article in "The Nation" does not restrict himself to criticism of the FBI. He infers that Oswald may have been a CIA agent and supports his reasoning from data published in the Soviet

newspaper "Pravda" that Oswald was an American spy who made numerous contacts with the American Embassy in Moscow. He also reports that Miss Pauline Bates, a public stenographer who typed notes for Oswald shortly after latter's return from Russia stated that Oswald "hinted he had gone to the Soviet as a U.S. secret agent," and that "when the State Department granted my visa, they stipulated they could not stand behind me in any way." Feldman interprets this as an admonition suggestive of instruction, to an undercover man. Feldman also criticizes the State Department for issuing Oswald a passport in June, 1963, for travel outside the U.S. despite his past record.

Regarding Miss Pauline Bates, mentioned above, we interviewed Miss Bates at Fort Worth, Texas, where she is employed on November 30, 1963. During our interview with Miss Bates she said Oswald talked very little while in her office and confined it mostly to interpreting his notes. She asked him why he went to Russia and he replied that he took an elementary course in the Russian language and became interested in going to Russia to see what the actual living conditions were like in that country.

Miss Bates also told us that after her contact with Oswald she mentioned the incident to her friend, Caroline Hamilton, who is a reporter for the "Fort Worth Press." After President Kennedy was assassinated, Miss Bates stated she was contacted by Caroline Hamilton regarding Oswald. Miss Bates also told us that on the afternoon of November 29, 1963, she had a recorded interview with the television network in her office. She also told us that the story by Caroline Hamilton which appeared in the "Fort Worth Press" on November 29, 1963, regarding her contact of Oswald is correct in every detail with the one exception that Oswald never stated he was working for the U.S. State Department. She explained Oswald stated the State Department was reluctant to give him a visa and told him he would be on his own while in Russia. From this statement, she at first assumed he was working with the State Department but later realized her assumption was false.

Miss Bates also told us that approximately 3:30 p.m. November 29, 1963, she received a phone call at her office from a woman who stated that she was Mrs. Oswald, mother of Lee Oswald. Mrs. Oswald told her "I cannot tell you where I am because I am under tight security. I heard an interview of you on the radio regarding typing Lee's diary. I remember him saying he had a public stenographer type some of his notes. I wish you wouldn't talk with anyone about this until I can talk to you. Otherwise you may hurt his widow and the children."

Memorandum for Mr. Sullivan
Re: Lee Harvey Oswald
105-82555

During our interview with Miss Bates on November 30, 1963, she did not make a statement that Oswald "hinted he had gone to the Soviet Union as a U.S. secret agent."

ACTION

None, except that the Director will be separately advised regarding results of our inquiries by the San Antonio office described herein. A copy of the January 27, 1964, issue of "The Nation" wherein article regarding Oswald appears, is attached.

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Well Wed.